

EVERY-DAY LIFE

ILLUSTRATED BY THE LIFE OF JESUS.

With Pictures by the Masters

AND

ORIGINAL STORIES.

BY

MRS. E. C. WILSON,

AUTHOR OF "NEW-TESTAMENT PARABLES."

PART II.

FOURTH EDITION.

BOSTON:

Storage FARIAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY.

1903.

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BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

THE GIFT OF

UNITARIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL
SOCIETY

OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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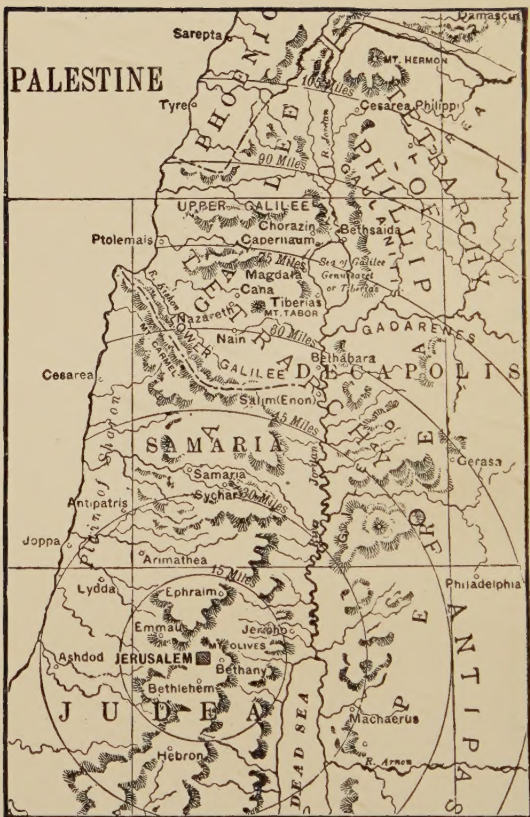
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THE author has but one word to bespeak for these lessons. It is a word she would always bespeak for all Sunday School lessons for young children,—that they be not hurried. Induce the little one to tell the “whole story,” and endeavor to have the class catch the spirit and inspiration of it, not dwelling much upon separate texts and verses. Going rapidly from thought to thought makes a *brilliant* lesson, but a more *profitable* one can be had and a deeper impression made by lingering over picture and lesson and story.

QUINCY, 1888.

E. C. W.



CONTENTS.



	PAGE
I. JESUS LEAVING HIS MOTHER	7
Illustration by Plockhorst.	
Story : " Poor Little Howard " grown up.	
II JESUS TEACHING IN THE SYNAGOGUE	15
Illustration by Bida.	
Story : Mother's Bargain.	
III. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT	24
Illustration by Bida.	
Story : " A Century of Dishonor. "	
IV. JESUS TEACHING BY THE SEA-SHORE	35
Illustration by Hofmann.	
Story : A Poet's Fancy about Nature.	
V. JESUS BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN	45
Illustration by Bida.	
Story : Star-flower and Violet	
VI. THE CALLING OF THE DISCIPLES	53
Illustration by Bida.	
Story : The Tree of Life.	



I must be about my Father's business.

[First said in the Temple, when Jesus was twelve years old. Uttered, perhaps, again as he leaves Nazareth, thirty years old.]

EVERY-DAY LIFE.

I.

JESUS LEAVING HIS MOTHER.

Look well at this beautiful picture with the two faces so earnest. Get the picture strongly into your mind. I know it cannot fail to make you love your mother a little more; it cannot fail to help you understand what a great blessing is a good mother. How intently Mary listens as her grown-up son Jesus talks to her!

What is he telling her?

He is telling her that he must leave her and go away from his home.

Read the verse under the picture. When did Jesus say that to his mother? (Luke ii. 49.)

We can almost fancy that is what he is saying to her now, as he tells her he must go away.

What is his Father's business that he must be about?

Teaching and preaching to the people.

Can you not almost hear what he is saying?

"I must go and tell our people that it is not bowings down, nor the blood and fat of millions of slain lambs that Jehovah loves, nor yet all their forms and fastings. I must tell them that Jehovah is our Father, and that He

wants us to love Him and to love one another and live good lives. Our Father is our Father always; dying is only going to Him. They do not know these things. I must tell them."

And did Jesus teach his people all these things?

Yes; all the rest of his life was spent teaching and doing good among them.

How old was Jesus at this time?

Nearly thirty years old.

Where had he been all these years since he was a boy and went up to Jerusalem to the Passover Feast?

He had been at home in Nazareth working at his carpenter's trade.

Read the last two verses of the 2d chapter of Luke. We may be perfectly certain that all these years Jesus was noticing the wrong ideas which his people had of God, and that he felt sad on account of them. Oh, so full of strange ideas they were! It is true they believed God was round about them always, but they thought there were evil demons—thousands of them—all about them also. If a person was sick they believed, oftentimes, that an evil spirit was in him. And then the forms they went through in worship! The service in the Temple and Synagogue was only a small part of their worship. There was a passage of twenty-one verses which every man must say over twice a day, morning and evening. It would be very interesting for you to see what these verses were. You will find them in Deut. vi. 4-9, xi. 13-21; Numbers xv. 37-41. Then there was a long prayer which every one must repeat three times a day. Prayers also at every meal, and extra ones on the Sabbath and feast days. Then there were ever so many forms about clean things and unclean things, and clean people and unclean people. They must not eat with sinners. They must not

deal with the Samaritans. They must go only a certain distance on the Sabbath. I cannot tell you half the things they must and they must not do. They spent half their time trying to get through the form of them, and yet somehow to "get out" of them and to do as they liked. And this was their worship! No wonder Jesus longed to go among them and teach them sweeter and truer things about "Our Father"!

Who are those men waiting outside for Jesus?

They are some of Jesus' disciples.

Who are the disciples?

They are men who went about with Jesus and learned of him, that they might help him teach the people.

By and by we shall learn more about these disciples.

Do you believe Jesus' mother felt willing that he should leave his work and home and go away to preach?

Mothers are always pleased to have their grown-up children go away to do a good work. Every mother knows that when her boys and girls are grown up they will probably go out into the world to make homes of their own or to do their own work in the world.

Are not mothers sorry and sad at parting with their children, even if they are grown up?

Yes, indeed; yet with the sorrow is a great happiness, too, if they feel sure they will live noble and useful lives.

Truly, then, Mary's heart must be full of happiness. What a rich reward she is getting for all her years of caring for her son!

And what is her reward?

Her reward is seeing Jesus go out into the world about his Father's business.

No mother can have a greater reward for all the years of tender and loving care she gives her children, than to see

them start out in the world to make it sweeter and better. Oh, the sorrow of a mother's heart when she must see her child, once a beautiful baby in her arms, go forth from her selfish, ungentle, dishonest, perhaps even a thief or a drunkard! Dear little children, think for a moment what your mother is to you. Think of her constant care of you. She never, never tires of thinking and of doing for your well-being and your pleasure. See to it that you are gathering together for her in these childhood years the great reward she deserves. See that you gather up all good things into your heart and mind, so that by and by when you must go away from your mother you will leave with her the sweet peace of knowing you are brave and strong and true to do work in the world. And don't save up all her reward till you must leave her. Let her have it little by little every day and all the time.

How can you do that?

By loving her and letting her see your love in your actions; by being thankful to her and showing your thankfulness, and by obeying her.

There is an Eastern proverb which says, "God could not be everywhere, therefore he made mothers." The people who have that for a proverb must have a great reverence for mothers. Keep their proverb well in your heart, and get as much of their reverence for mothers as you can. A longer life than yours has your mother lived. Let her loving wisdom guide your little life. Give her the joy of a cheerful, prompt obedience all your young days. These childhood years are your time for being trained in the work you will be called upon to do by and by. The little kitten grows to be a cat in a few weeks; the tiny chicken grows to be a hen in one short summer; baby birds fly from their nests in just a few weeks. They have no great work to do;

they do not need a long learning time. But you, — God means you to do a good work for Him by and by, and He gives you a long, long time in which to fit yourself for it, and a loving mother to guide you through it. Don't wait till you are old before you let yourself know what a great blessing mother is. Love her, trust her, honor her now.

Read this little story of Howard Norton and his mother. Save your mother as much as you can of the pain he gave to his.

“POOR LITTLE HOWARD” GROWN UP.

HOWARD NORTON had a bright, cheery home of his own, with a bright, cheery wife and four bright, cheery children. One of the world's happiest men he was, and a good man as well. His neighbors liked him; his business friends liked him too, and trusted him.

One day his mother sent him from her home — his own boyhood's home — a chest containing many things, “which,” she wrote, “you may care for; they are of no more use to me.” How every article in that chest carried him back to childhood and forgotten days! Among the things was an old time-worn book. He opened it. It was his mother's journal of that long-ago time. He knew it had got into the chest by accident. He opened the book. Almost the first sentence his eye lighted upon was this one: —

“Howard told a lie. He is not truthful. He carried away Josie's knife, and declares he knows nothing about it. Poor little Howard! We must make him truthful; but how can it be done?”

“Little rascal!” laughed Mr. Norton. “I remember it well. I was eight years old then.”

Farther on he read: —

"Howard struck his sister and hurt her badly. His anger comes quickly and terribly. What can we do with our little Howard? I believe harshness would make him worse, yet gentleness does n't seem to make him better. He gives us more pain and more care than all the others, yet I am sure he is not a bad boy."

"Not a bad boy!" muttered Mr. Norton. "Everybody but mother called me a bad boy. A hundred times I was told I should wind up at the gallows, and the wonder is I did n't. Outgrew it all, I suppose!"

Mr. Norton did not laugh any more as he read the records of his naughty, forgotten childhood. It was all full of a mother's tenderness and love and faith battling with her boy's heedless, headstrong ways.

"And I think I outgrew my wickedness!" murmured Mr. Norton. "Oh, mother! now I know it might all have 'grown in' but for you. And yet I loved my mother," he added thoughtfully.

For a full hour the "poor little Howard," grown now to strong manhood, pored over the little book, till it seemed to him something holy, and the thought of his mother was to him like the thought of an angel. He picked up the book and found his wife. Almost in reverence he showed her these records of his stormy boyhood and his mother's love.

"And now," said he, in great shame, "all alone she is finishing out her life at the homestead, with none of her loved ones around her, and I think her well cared for because she has a comfortable home, and we all visit her once a year!"

Mrs. Norton thought of her own little ones now growing up around her. Tears came to her eyes as she pictured herself grown old and longing for their love. She said very softly, —

"I know what you wish. She shall end her days with her 'naughty little Howard' and his children."

The poor old mother at first thought she could not leave her home. She was old and useless, she said; she knew she should be in the way. But they made the picture of her corner in their home so bright and full of love that the temptation was too great, and "grandmother" became the very centre of all thoughtfulness and loving care in Howard Norton's home. They did everything in their power to make her days peaceful and happy; and all this time one thing they were doing which they never thought of at all or knew they were doing, — they were all making their own hearts tender and helpful and reverent.

Begin right now, boys, — right from this very day, — to make your mother's life a happy one. Some day you will leave your home. Read this stanza, and know that much more than you think, your mother is the "light of home." Obey her and love her now, and her influence will be with you all your life.

"My son, thou wilt dream the world is fair,
And thy spirit will sigh to roam;
And thou must go, — but never when there
Forget the light of home."

And now, little girls, Mr. Kingsley has written a stanza just for you. Did you ever read Mr. Kingsley's charming little story, — "Water Babies"? If you have n't, and it is in your Sunday School library, get it and read it. If it is n't there, ask your superintendent if he does n't think he could manage to have it put there. Here is the stanza. Mr. Kingsley calls it a "lesson for every day."

“Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever ;
Do noble things, not dream them all day long ;
And so make life, death, and that vast forever
One grand, sweet song.”

The stanza is not especially about mothers ; but truly, you cannot give your mother more joy than by making your life “ a grand, sweet song ” for her.

Honor thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. — DEUT. v. 16.



And he preached in the Synagogues of Galilee. LUKE iv. 44.

And they were astonished at his doctrine; for his word was with power. LUKE iv. 32.

II.

JESUS TEACHING IN THE SYNAGOGUE.

And they went into Capernaum ; and straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

And they were astonished at his doctrine : for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. — MARK i. 21, 22.

And there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. — LUKE iv. 14.

And when it was day, he departed, and went into a desert place ; and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent.

And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee. — LUKE iv. 42-44.

WHAT is a synagogue ?

A synagogue is a Jewish meeting-house.

Was Jesus a priest or a minister, that he should preach in the synagogue ?

No ; any member of the congregation who was fitted to do so might preach. There was no regular preacher.

Was the synagogue holy, like the Temple ?

It was not so holy as the Temple, still it was held sacred.

How often was service held in the synagogue ?

There was a short service every morning, and a longer and grander one on the Sabbath and on festival days.

Why were services held so often ?

So that the people might not forget the Scriptures which they had learned, and all the forms of worship.

Did a great many go to synagogue every morning?

Yes; in the cities and towns, but not always in the country.

Did they hold service just the same if only six or seven were there?

The Jews never held service unless ten people were present.

Did they always have ten people present?

Ten men were appointed in every synagogue, so that at least as many as that number might always be present.

Wasn't that a good way to be sure of an audience? If a Jew should walk three or four miles to go to synagogue he would be disappointed if he were obliged to return without any service. You see by this arrangement he always knew there was no danger of that.

Was the service in the synagogue like that in the Temple?

No; the daily service was very simple indeed, and there was no burning of offerings. Some prayers were recited, then some portions of the Scripture were read by the reader. But, you remember, the Scripture was not written in the language spoken by the people; so the reader read but a little at a time, stopping after each bit for a man by his side to tell the people its meaning. How would you like to hear the Bible read in that fashion in your church? After the reading came the sermon, which was an explanation of the Scripture. Everybody might have understood the sermon well enough, if — so many things are spoiled by an "if"! and the Jews had so many forms, which took the goodness out of their religion. You could never guess what was the absurd "if" which many times spoiled the sermon in

the synagogue. The preacher often thought himself too holy to speak directly to the common people, so he whispered his sermon bit by bit into the ear of a man by his side, and he spoke it to the people. The preacher fancied that gave him great dignity and made him seem important.

Was the synagogue used for anything else besides these services?

The school was held in it, and also the courts of justice.

Where was the synagogue usually built?

On the highest land in the town. If no very high place could be found for it, a tall pole was fastened to its top, so that every Jew on entering a town or village might immediately know where to find his synagogue.

I must tell you a little about the inside of the synagogue. At one end was the chest containing the Scriptures. In front of the chest was the lamp with eight branches, which was lighted only on festival days. This end of the synagogue was rather more sacred than the rest of it. Here were the "chief seats" and the "high places." The "common people" sat in the body of the building, the men and women apart from one another; at the entrance were the poor-boxes, much like those in many of our own churches. Near the door was a large board on which were written the names of those who had been put out of the synagogue for wrong-doing or for using profane words.

I believe these synagogues held a dearer place in the hearts of the people than they knew. They had a great reverence for the Temple, and thought of it with awe. Only those who lived in or near Jerusalem could worship daily in the Temple; the others could never enjoy the Temple except when they went up to Jerusalem on festival days. But the synagogue was part of their every-day life from their earliest childhood. From the synagogue of his town Jesus

received his religion and his education. We may think of him as going to the synagogue every day all through his boyhood, perhaps even through his manhood, even up to the time when he began to preach.

Who will read the verses at the beginning of the lesson?

Are these verses all that the Gospels tell us of Jesus' preaching in the synagogue?

No; all through the Gospels we read of his preaching.

What did Jesus teach in the synagogues?

Like all preachers in the synagogue, he explained the Scriptures.

Who will read the verses under the picture?

Can you tell why there "went out a fame of him," and why "the people were astonished at his doctrine"?

Because he showed them that they did not rightly understand their Scriptures, and he gave them new and simpler meanings.

I will try to make you understand a little about it. The Old Testament, this sacred Scripture of the Jews, has, in its Law, pages and pages of tiresome directions about the forms in which the Jews were to worship. At one time, say these Scriptures, the Lord called Moses up into a mountain alone, and told him to "speak to the people" the words He should say to him. Then follow six long chapters about the offerings He wants, and the way He wants them made. These chapters begin with the twenty-fifth chapter of Exodus. You will not want to read them all, but you will find it truly interesting to turn to them and look them over, and see how wearisome they are; and there are many more just like them, all about offerings. Look, also, at the fourteenth chapter of Deuteronomy. That tells very particularly what animals and birds and fishes the Jews may eat, and which are "unclean" and may not be eaten. Read the twenty-first verse

of that chapter, and you will not be astonished that the Jews thought God loved them and only them.

Which part of the Scripture is called the Law?

The first five books.

You can find their names if you like, by looking at the first five books of your Old Testament. The first of these books, Genesis, tells about the creation of the world. The other four books are brimming full of just such dreary directions as these chapters you have read. And this Law they regarded as the most sacred part of their Scriptures. So you will not wonder that the Jews were very particular indeed about the forms of their worship. If all the Old Testament were like these chapters, it would not be the wonderful book it is. Turn over now and look at the Psalms. No grander poetry was ever written. Look into the Proverbs, so full of wise sayings; yet what Jesus saw in his time — and he beheld it with deep sadness — was that his people were keeping the letter of the Law with great fussiness, but had let go out of their lives the worshipful spirit of their old psalm-singers and prophets. It was as if you should do very carefully some of the particular things your parents told you to do, but should not in the least have the spirit of obedience, nor try to know their wishes. It was as if you should press the juice from an orange and still imagine it a good orange all the same.

Very many children obey their parents and teachers in the letter, but not in the spirit. Very many people obey and worship God in the letter, but not in the spirit. If we have the Spirit of God in us, we do not very much need great numbers of directions what to do and what not to do. The Spirit will guide us aright.

Now, can you understand what Jesus tried to teach about the Scriptures? Could he make the people understand him?

Not very easily; they were only astonished.

Who will read the second text under the picture? Why was Jesus' word "with power"?

Because he was so earnest, and so full of his great thoughts. He longed to have his people worship God truly, instead of with forms. He longed to have them see that "God is a spirit, and that they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth," and that what God loves is not forms and sacrifices, but a noble and a loving life. Our word is always "with power" when we have great thoughts to speak, and love those to whom we speak them.

Little children, boys and girls, all of you, have the spirit of right in you; then you will do and say right things easily, and can trust yourselves. Don't obey in the letter; don't worship in the letter; don't love in the letter. Obey and worship and love "in spirit and in truth." Learn this short text of Saint Paul's, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. iii. 6). Be sure you know what the text means, and then read this story and see how Chauncy's father taught him what it means.

MOTHER'S BARGAIN.

"WE have n't half as much money for the Fourth as the other boys have," said Harvey Ross, counting his little fortune discontentedly.

"That's so," joined in Chauncy. "I wish we could earn some."

"I will give you a chance to earn some money," said their mother. "I will give you each five cents a day if you will each one amuse Flossie an hour every morning. You know how hard it is to keep her happy since she had the fever, poor little darling! but you must keep her quite

content. There's just a week before the Fourth, and you can earn thirty-five cents apiece."

The little boys were delighted; they found Flossie and began their task at once. Harvey went into his work with great zeal. He didn't call it work; he called it play. Every morning he was Flossie's merry, laughing slave for an hour, and often the one hour was nearer two hours, and her ringing baby laugh sounded as it did before her illness. But Chauncy managed differently. He took a book with him, or a kite to mend. Then he "set her going," as he called it, at some game, and she was quiet, and he got his work done too. He called that killing two birds with one stone. But little Flossie was only half happy, and was more tired than rested when Chauncy gave her up to his mother promptly at the end of his hour. His mother talked a little with him about it, but he said:—

"Well, I keep her quiet, don't I?"

"And happy?" asked his mother.

"Why, yes," answered Chauncy; "if she was n't happy, she would make a fuss, I fancy."

The morning before the Fourth, Mrs. Ross said to Harvey:—

"Harvey, truly you have pleased me very much by the spirit you have put into the keeping of our bargain this week. I want to add these two bright silver dimes to your thirty-five cents to show you how much I appreciate the brightness you have put into Flossie's little world this week."

Chauncy was quite provoked. He said it ought to have been in the bargain, if she was going to give extra like that; and when Harvey offered to share with him, it only made him the more ill-natured.

The boys' father had been noticing it all. Toward evening he went into town.

"What shall I bring you, boys?" he called out as he started off.

"Fire-crackers!"

"Fire-crackers it is. I'll bring you each a bunch."

The boys were in bed when their father came home. In the morning he gave them their presents. In about an hour Chauncy came to his father and said:—

"My fire-crackers won't go off."

"What seems to be the matter with them?"

"They're damp, I think."

"Oh, yes; I remember Mr. Gregg said they were a little damp, and he let me have them cheaper."

"But what are they good for, I should like to know, without any snap in them?" asked Chauncy, beginning to get indignant.

"Oh, I don't know," was the indifferent answer. "I promised to get you some fire-crackers, and I kept my promise."

"But —" Chauncy stopped. He was too much amazed to go on.

"Oh, a great many people keep their promises in that fashion," explained his father, calmly. "They keep the letter of the promise; they don't bind themselves to keep the spirit."

The whole family laughed, and Chauncy's face flushed; but in a moment he asked smartly:—

"But don't you call that a mean way to keep a promise?"

"Yes, Chauncy, I do," laughed his father; "and I won't do it. I'll make it up to you." And Mr. Ross astonished Chauncy by bringing forth a new and good bunch of fire-crackers.

"And I won't do it either," echoed Chauncy, tossing up Flossie. "'I'll make it up to you,' little puss. A Ross is a

Ross, and father isn't going to get ahead of me in being honest. You and I will have an hour together every day this week, and you 'll see it shall be a jolly one."

And honorable little Chauncy did "make it up" to Flossie royally. At the end of the week he opened his eyes very wide when his mother brought him two bright silver dimes like Harvey's, saying : —

"Somehow, Chauncy, I feel as though I had something to 'make up to you.'"

"I should think the Rosses were quite a family for 'making up' things," laughed Chauncy.

This is how Chauncy Ross got his first experience lesson in learning that "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

"Whate'er you think, whate'er you do,
Whate'er you purpose or pursue,
It may be small, but must be true."

Well done, thou good and faithful servant : thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.—MATT. xxv. 21.

Do you remember when Jesus said these encouraging words? Perhaps you will like to find them, and read the whole story of it. It was in one of his parables, and begins at the 14th verse of the 25th chapter of Matthew.

III.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain : and when he was set, his disciples came unto him.

And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful : for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peace-makers : for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad : for great is your reward in heaven : for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

MATT. v. 1-12.

Is this the whole of the Sermon on the Mount ?

No ; this is only the beginning of it.

How long is the whole sermon ?

Three long chapters.

We do not know that it was all preached at one time ; but these three chapters have always been called the "Sermon on the Mount," and we think of it as the best sermon ever preached.



And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him; and he opened his mouth and taught them. MATT. v. 1, 2.

Read the first two verses. What mountain was it upon which this sermon was preached?

We cannot know exactly, but it was probably one of the mountains near the Sea of Galilee.

Why do you suppose Jesus went up into a mountain to preach?

Perhaps to get apart from busy crowds. But, after all, we do not need any reason for Jesus going up into a mountain to preach. He often went up into a mountain to pray. A mountain is a delightful place to be on. Thoughtful people have always loved the hill-tops.

Have you ever been on the top of a mountain or high hill? Did you not like to be there? *Why* did you like it?

I like it because it gives such a big horizon. That is a large word, but I believe some of you will know what it means.

Who can tell what a horizon is?

When we are in a high place we seem to be right in the centre of things, — right in the centre of a big circle all about us which shuts in all we can see and shuts out all we cannot see. The sky seems like a great blue dome resting on this circle. This circle is the horizon. The higher up we go, the bigger our horizon gets.

Can you tell *why* our horizon gets bigger as we go higher?

I shall leave you to find that out. But is it not a great delight to be in the centre of a *big* horizon, — to see so far and so wide? I believe it makes one's thoughts large to have a large horizon. Sir Walter Scott was a poet. He wrote also some of the best stories ever written. When he was little more than a baby he was very lame. The doctor told his parents to have him wrapped in a warm sheepskin every morning and carried up on the hill, to remain there all day with the shepherds and the sheep. John Ruskin says

that this, and living in a house with large rooms, may have set his mind into the large, free way of thinking he had. We cannot tell about that ; but it really does help us to forget trifles and small vexations to be in a high, open place. People like to have their *home* on a hill. But whether we have our home on a hill or not, we can keep our *mind* high.

Did you ever hear any one called high-minded ? What does it mean ? What do we mean when we say a man is *low-minded* ?

We call good, pure things high ; mean and wrong things we call low. Get on a hill as often as you can. I'm sure it makes it easier to be *high-minded* to *be* high once in a while. Try it. See if the cool hill air and the wide horizon, while they make your feet feel bounding, do not also make your heart feel happy and loving. See if you do not find that all foolish thoughts have gone out of you.

What did Jesus preach about in the synagogues ?

He explained the Scriptures, the Law and the Prophets, and the doctrines.

Here on the mountain did he explain the Scriptures ?

Not one word of such things is in the whole sermon.

What is this sermon about ?

About being good, and living high and pure lives. In the synagogues he explained the Scriptures because it was the custom to do so. But out here in the open air, with all these earnest faces looking into his, Jesus felt a great longing to make his people know that above all this law and Scriptures our Heavenly Father loves a pure and good life, — a life all full of loving, helpful things. So he says nothing of the bowings down and the sacrifices, but tells them — what ? All the beautiful things in this wonderful sermon. First of all he speaks the divine words at the head of this lesson.

What is the word which begins nearly all these verses ?

What are these verses called?

They are called the Beatitudes.

What does beatitude mean?

It means blessedness.

How many of these Beatitudes are there? Count them. I hope some of you will learn them, — to repeat by heart, even if you cannot wholly understand them. The meaning to them will grow as *you* grow. We cannot stop to learn much about them now, but I want you to notice one thing. There is not one of them which reads anything like this: "Blessed are those who have a great deal of money," or "Blessed are those who never have anything to vex them." No; because although that may *seem* true, it is *not* true.

Are not riches, then, a good thing?

Yes, indeed, if we use them well. Riches can enable us to do a great deal of good. They can give us a great deal of comfort and happiness, too; but they can give us no real *blessedness* which we cannot have without them. So get all the riches you can honestly get, and use them well; but make up your mind that, rich or poor, you will at all events be happy, be blessed. For, rich or poor, we may all be "merciful," may all be "pure in heart," may all be "peace-makers," and so may all be blessed.

Many of the best-known and best-loved of all Jesus' sayings are in this sermon. The very next verse which comes after these Beatitudes is one of them.

Read this verse; perhaps some one will learn it.

Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. — MATT. v. 13.

For what is salt used?

To flavor food?

Yes ; and for what else ?

To preserve food and keep it sweet.

Have you ever read Robinson Crusoe ? Do you remember what trouble he had to get salt to preserve his meat ? Does salt ever really lose its savor ?

Not our salt, perhaps. But the salt of Jesus' land loses all its saltiness if it is stored away and not used ; and it is then actually "cast out and trodden under foot of men."

Did you never see any *people* who had lost their saltiness and got "cast out" ? What is the saltiness which they have lost ?

It is their goodness ; their righteousness.

Have you never heard any one say of a good person, "He is one of the salt of the earth" ?

It is the righteous people all over the earth that are the salt of the earth ; it is they who keep the earth sweet and make it worth living in at all. Be sure *you* are numbered among the "salt of the earth." Do not lose your savor. What does that mean ?

Which one of all Jesus' teachings is the best known ? Who will repeat the Lord's Prayer ?

The Lord's Prayer is in this sermon too (Matt. vi. 9). Of course you all know it by heart.

Did Jesus want us always to pray in these words ?

No, indeed. He said, "After this *manner* pray ye."

Was this manner very different from the Jews' regular manner of praying ?

Very different indeed. The Jews used to say over and over to Jehovah the prayers in the Old Testament, without much noticing sometimes what they were saying. They thought they should be heard for their "much speaking." Jesus tells them to say, "Our Father," and ask for things which in their hearts they really want.

What beautiful Rule to live by did Jesus give us in this sermon?

The Golden Rule.

Who will repeat the Golden Rule?

"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them" (Matt. vii. 12).

We often hear it like this: "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you." I think it has been put that way to make it easier for children to learn. If all children would learn it either way, and *live* by it, what a glorious child-world you boys and girls would live in! Try it.

I wish we could stop to read all of this wonderful sermon, and talk about it together. It is in this sermon that Jesus begins his picture-making way of teaching, making for the people beautiful little stories and parables out of all the inspiring out-of-door things about them, — the fowls of the air, the lilies of the field, the sparrows, the sun and the rain, the corrupt tree and the good tree, and all the rest. Will you not, after you go home, get some one to read this sermon all through with you and help you notice all these little references to the things about Jesus?

And then this long sermon ends with an out-of-door story which is plain enough for even the smallest of you to understand. He had told them many, many things to make them better and happier, and now by this story he tells them that it will all do them no good if — Read the story and *you* can tell.

Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock;

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock;

And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand :

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell : and great was the fall of it.

And it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine.

For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

I am sure I do not need to explain the meaning of this story to you.

Did the people of Palestine *really* need to build their houses upon a rock ?

Yes ; for in Palestine there are very heavy rains and floods every spring. Read about Palestine on the page opposite the map. Perhaps even while Jesus was telling this story his eye fell on one of these naked spots of white rock.

Do we build our houses on a rock ? Why do we like to build our houses where there is not a rock ? Did the houses in Palestine have cellars ?

The houses we live in do not need to be built upon a rock. But we have another kind of a house which does need to be built upon a rock, — firm and strong. Henry Ward Beecher called our character our soul-house. Truly our character, our soul-house, ought to be built so strong and firm that no temptation can make it fall.

How can we build our character strong and firm ? Who does Jesus say is like the man who built upon a rock ?

“ He that heareth these sayings and *doeth* them.”

Truly we love and admire all these sayings of Jesus in this grand sermon. But it is not enough to love and admire them, it is not enough even to *feel* ; we must *do* them. Think of some of the ways you have of being taught !

You have your schools, your churches, your parents, good books, and many other helps to be good and do right. But after you have learned what is right and true, *do* it ; else the teaching will all be in vain. We know of many people who have started up and *done* what others, looking on, only saw *ought* to be, and then passed on. Those who act are the truly great. Even a child has many chances to do in little things just what Helen Hunt Jackson did in a large thing. Read about it.

“A CENTURY OF DISHONOR.”

THAT is the name of a book written a few years ago, and a sorrowful name it is. It was written by a woman, and I would like you to know how she happened to write it. Her name was Helen Hunt Jackson.

First, let us be sure we know the meaning of those big words. A century, — that's a hundred years ! A hundred years of shame ! a hundred years of false dealing ! That is what the title means. A hundred years is a long, long time for anything dishonorable. But you say you don't see how that could be, for a person would hardly live a hundred years. But it was n't a person at all ; it was a nation. “A nation do wrong like that !” you exclaim. Yes, and it was *our* nation, too. Right is right, for a nation as for a person. Wrong-doing is a dishonor to a nation as much as to a man or woman or child. Our nation has not always done right. It did wrong once about Slavery ; and a sad, sad price it paid afterward for its wrong-doing. In the beginning almost everybody, even those who owned slaves, knew Slavery was wrong. Especially the rulers knew it. “It *can't* be right,” they said, “for one person to buy and sell another just as though he were his horse. Slavery is a curse. *Some-*

time it will have to go." They knew the right but did n't *do* it. And at last Slavery got to be so big a giant in the land that it took five years of cruel war and the lives of thousands and thousands of brave men to kill it. Ah! when you know a thing is wrong, give it up. When you know what is right, *do* it. That is as good for a nation as for a person.

Was that the hundred years of dishonor Mrs. Jackson meant? It might have been, but it was n't. The "Century of Dishonor" her book tells about referred to the Indians. Do you know where the Indians came from? "Why," you exclaim, "they were already here when the white people came!" So they were. The white people were the ones that came. But you would n't think so, by the way the Indians have been treated. At first there was room enough for both the Indians and the white people. But, as the white people kept coming more and more, they made the Indians go farther and farther west, to keep out of their way. They pretended to *buy* the Indians' land. But they did n't; they just *took* it. At last, when the white people came to be a great nation, they wanted *all* the land. However, the poor Indians must have some place, so the whites set off portions of the land for them and told them they must stay there, and that they might always have them for their own. But it was n't very long before the white people wanted *those* places; so, without at all remembering their promises, they drove off the poor Indians again and again.

That is the way our nation has dealt with the Indians from the beginning. Is n't that more than a hundred years of false-dealing? And now is n't it plain to you where Helen Hunt Jackson got the name for her book? I know our nation would not deal falsely like that with white people like themselves. But they used to say about the negroes, "They are not *men*; they are *slaves*." So now

they said about the Indians, "They are not *men* ; they are just *Indians*." Some even said, "Keep pushing them west, west, west, till you get them into the Pacific Ocean." Some others said, "Have a big war with them and kill them all off." We are glad to say all that is over. Our nation is beginning to see now that, black or red or white, a man is a man and has a soul ; and our Government now is very much in earnest in trying to do the right thing about these poor unfortunate Indians. No one did more toward getting things started in the right direction than Helen Hunt Jackson. How did it happen? She chanced to go among them to visit them, as people are doing all the time. Most people used to go away feeling very sorrowful about it, saying, "It's too bad, too bad!" But they soon forgot about it, and it helped the Indians not a bit. But with her it was different. Like the others, she said, "This is all wrong ;" *unlike* the others, she set immediately to work to try to make it right. In a little time the people over the whole land were startled and shamed by her wonderful book, telling all about the wrongs they were allowing. She followed that book with another one, — a story about them which, I believe, made the people feel it all even more. Now everybody's heart is stirred, and people everywhere are giving money to help support schools and homes for the Indians. I'm sure you often hear about these Indian Missions, and I believe you will always feel more interested in them for learning this little about them.

I wish I could tell you more about this earnest, right-loving woman, — about her sorrows and her tender heart. She tried to do for the poor Indians what Harriet Beecher Stowe had done for the Negroes when she wrote her "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

Did you ever read "Uncle Tom's Cabin"?

No; I think you are too young. You will surely read it when you are grown up.

Did you ever *hear* about it?

Ask your father or mother or teacher to tell you about it, and what a great deal it did for the slaves. I would like to give you a whole lesson about these two noble women. There is a book called "Girls who became Famous," which gives the story of the lives of both of them, besides some others. It might be a little bit too hard for you to read, but would be a delightful book for some one to read to you.

Read this bit of poetry. James Russell Lowell wrote it. I think it almost seems written about Helen Hunt Jackson. Everybody loved her for the step she had taken, and all were much readier to do for the Indians for her sake. Almost all great things are brought about like that. Every one sees what needs to be done, and feels that it *ought* to be done. Then some noble one comes along and tries to *do* it, and the nobleness in the others comes out to meet him, and they all do it together.

"Be noble! And the nobleness which lies
In other men, sleeping, but never dead,
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own."

Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only. — JAMES i. 22.



And he spake many things unto them in parables. MATT. xiii. 3.

IV.

JESUS TEACHING BY THE SEA-SHORE.

WHAT a very life-like picture !

Is this the sea-shore of the great ocean ? What sea-shore is it ?

Find the Sea of Galilee on the map, and read what is said about it on the opposite page.

Now, who can tell its two other names ? How large is this lake ?

It is twelve or thirteen miles long, and about half as wide.

Did Jesus come here, as he went up the mountain, to find a quiet place ?

No, indeed ; this was the busiest place in all Galilee.

Why was it so busy a place ?

There were nine busy, thriving cities on this little lake. Think of it ! Nine cities on the shores of a little lake only twelve miles long ! And the lake was covered with fishing-boats. These cities were on the grand highway to and from the famous cities of the East. The merchantmen and the big caravans from the East, with their rich wares, passed here.

Is it as busy a place now as it was then ?

No ; not one thriving city is now on the shore, and no boats are to be seen on the waters.

Why is this ?

Because the Arabs, who are the greater part of the people

who live there now, hate the water. An Arab will spend hours going around the lake rather than sail across it in a boat.

Do the Arabs care for fishing?

The Arabs think it a disgrace to earn a living in any way except by robbery. Their entire business is highway robbery.

What was the country around this sea formerly called?

The Garden of Galilee.

Why was it called by that pretty name?

Because the soil is so rich and everything grew so finely. It was the same in the valley of the Jordan River.

Does it look like a garden there now?

No; it is a deserted, forlorn-looking place.

Why is it deserted?

People do not have courage to cultivate gardens where robbers are allowed to live without being punished.

The country is governed by Turkey, and it is very badly governed, else the Arabs would not be allowed to live by robbery. On account of the bad government, too, the taxes are very high. The tax upon one fig-tree is about as much as the value of all the figs that grow upon it.

What river flows right through this Sea of Galilee? Where does the Jordan River rise?

It rises on the slopes of Lebanon.

Look at the river on the map. See how it flows through the Sea of Galilee, then almost the whole length of Palestine into the Dead Sea. The Jordan River is a muddy stream before it flows into the clear sparkling waters of the lake. It flows out of the lake quiet and clear; but once well out, it rushes madly along all the way, twisting and turning and changing its direction constantly. Now read what is said about the Jordan River on the page opposite the map.

Was very much of Jesus' life spent around the Sea of Galilee?

Yes, after he came to manhood.

See if you can find Capernaum on this sea. Capernaum was at one time Jesus' home. Read about Capernaum on the page opposite the map, and see if you can find out what it was called.

Here on the shores of the lake, in these busy cities, Jesus always found crowds to listen to him. No other little lake and river in all the world are so widely talked of and so lovingly thought about by Christians as this little Sea of Galilee and this Jordan River. Why is that? I am sure you can tell.

Are *all* these people who are listening to Jesus fishermen?

No, indeed; but probably a good many are.

See the young man with his dog in the corner of the picture. How earnestly he is listening! He is a shepherd. He has left his sheep to come and hear Jesus. Some of the men are probably husbandmen, and some laborers in vineyards, and farmers, and gardeners. And many, too, you see, are women, who have come here with their little ones to listen to Jesus.

What is Jesus saying to them?

The text under the picture will tell you that.

Who can tell what a parable is?

A parable is a story or saying which tells of earthly things, but which is meant to teach something about heavenly things. What Jesus said in parables was always a *likeness* of what he wished to teach.

Why did Jesus speak in parables?

It was easier to make his hearers understand them.

What were his parables about? Do you remember any of them?

Many of these parable-stories were made from the persons and things his eye fell upon as he spoke from the boat. Perhaps this very shepherd boy made the parable of the "good shepherd" come to his mind. Perhaps those other men being owners of vineyards brought to his mind the parables of the "wicked husbandmen" and the "laborers in the vineyard" and the "two debtors." As he looked off on the hillsides and saw the sheep feeding, he spoke the parable of the "lost sheep." There on the hillsides he saw the vineyards also, and the fields of wheat which the "sower went forth to sow," the mustard-tree, and the fields in which treasure might be hid. About him, too, he saw the fishermen with their nets. Of all these things and many others he "spake unto them in parables."

How many parables of Jesus have we ?

There are more than forty, besides ever so many sayings and teachings, such as those in the Sermon on the Mount, of which you learned in the last lesson.

Were *all* the parables about out-of-door things ?

No ; there were many others.

Can you remember any others ?

How very closely Jesus observed everything, and what beautiful lessons he got from all the people and things and doings about him ! We like these out-of-door teachings on the mountain and by the sea-shore which Jesus gave to the people when he was right among them in their busy every-day life. They are very dear to us. We love them and remember them much better than the doctrinal ones he gave in the synagogues.

It seems very delightful to me,—this old way they had of teaching out-of-doors by the water-side, on the hillside, or in the flower-spangled fields or shady woods. Nature herself teaches so much ! I cannot help think-

ing it is easier to be gentle and good out-of-doors than in-doors.

But is it true that being out-of-doors always makes us good? What people can you think of who have lived almost entirely out of doors? Were the Indians gentle and kind? Are people who live in the country gentler and kinder and better than those in the city?

No, it is not true that out-of-door life always makes us good.

Why is this, if Nature has so much to teach us?

Ah! Nature is not like your teacher at school, — to make you learn whether you will or no. Out in her wonderful sunshine, under her glorious sky, she only *invites* us to hear her songs and listen to her tales and read her open book. Her sweetest lessons, Nature never compels us to learn. Jesus once said to his disciples, "Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear."

What does that verse mean?

In this verse we have the secret of it all. And how is it with *you*, little boys and girls, with your bright young eyes? Are they eyes that see and ears that hear? Do you go through this beautiful paradise God has given us for our home with eyes and ears open to the beauty and melody of it, or do you fail to notice how grand and wonderful it is, and how much there is to learn from it? Have you ever heard it said of any one, "Nature is a sealed book to him"? Can you tell what that means?

Why, it means just this: that he does n't see at all the beauties and wonders and glories in the midst of which our Heavenly Father has put us. Be sure you don't let God's big book be sealed to *you*. Keep your eyes open and your ears open, and more than all keep your heart open to the teachings of Nature.

More than a hundred years ago, away off on a farm in Scotland, lived a poor farmer-boy who loved Nature almost as if she were really his teacher and friend. While he worked he made verses about the things around him. One day, in ploughing, he turned up a pretty field daisy. Full of pity for it, a poem at once grew in his mind, in which he called it "wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower." Just those verses alone would have made Robert Burns known and loved; but you may be sure that, with such feelings in his heart, he wrote many other poems. Another time he ploughed up the nest of a poor mother mouse and her little ones. So the "wee mousie" got some verses too. No wonder Robert Burns became loved and famous. His keen eye saw everything; his heart was always ready to feel for others. People all the world over like these Nature-loving, open-hearted souls, even if they do not themselves love Nature. All people love Nature *some*; let us love her *much*. Livingstone, who, you remember, spent so many years in Africa, tells us the love of Nature was a very great comfort to him. For many, many weeks at a time he would have no companions but the brutal, unlovely savages. Often he wearied and sickened of their presence, and they seemed hardly to him like human beings. Then Nature was his companion. It was well for him that he possessed this love of Nature; for he turned to her, and she was to him a soothing, gentle friend.

I could keep on telling you, for many pages, of the great men and women and the little children who have loved Nature and had great joy and delight in her. I must tell you of just one more, on account of the beautiful poem our beloved poet Longfellow wrote for him.

Louis Agassiz was born in far-away Switzerland. He gave his whole life to studying and learning about Nature. He liked especially to learn about fishes. If you should ever

visit Harvard College, be sure to ask to be shown the Agassiz Museum. Agassiz came over here to visit our country. People soon found out what a great man he was, and they made him a professor in Harvard College, and would not let him go back. His genial, warm-hearted, smiling nature made everybody his friend ; and Longfellow, whose home was near the college, knew him and loved him always. This man thought he saw the hand of God in every tiny bit of the big world about him. Once he said, "He hides His secrets from me only to allure me graciously on to the unfolding of them." What a trusting thing to say about his Heavenly Father ! Be sure you understand it well when you repeat it. His thought was like the poet Macdonald's. Read this stanza, and see if you do not think so :

"Come to me, come to me, O my God !

Come to me everywhere !

Let the trees mean Thee, and the grassy sod,

And the water and the air."

You would do well to learn that beautiful stanza ; at all events, read it two or three times, till you are sure you understand it.

It was when Agassiz was just a half-century old that Longfellow wrote for him the poem I told you of. Here are five stanzas of it ; these are enough to show you that it is as lovely a birthday poem as could be written : —

"It was fifty years ago

In the pleasant month of May,

In the beautiful Pays de Vaud,

A child in its cradle lay.

"And Nature, the old nurse, took

The child upon her knee,

Saying : ' Here is a story-book

Thy Father has written for thee.'

“Come, wander with me,” she said,
 ‘Into regions yet untrod;
 And read what is still unread
 In the manuscripts of God.’

“And he wandered away and away
 With Nature, the dear old nurse,
 Who sang to him night and day
 The rhymes of the universe.

“And whenever the way seemed long,
 Or his heart began to fail,
 She would sing a more wonderful song,
 Or tell a more marvellous tale.”

I cannot tell you which takes more pleasure and pride in Agassiz, — Switzerland as his mother, or our country as his foster-mother.

Now read this “Fancy about Nature.” I believe it will help you understand the thoughts I have been trying to give you. Turn back to the preface and see where this book is written. A good many years ago a poet was living in this town named Christopher P. Cranch. It was he who had this pretty “Fancy.” He wrote it in verse; but the verses would be too hard for you to understand, and I will tell it to you in easier words. I shall tell you the very first line of his poem, though, changing just one word of it so you can see the meaning better. Isn’t it a very, very lovely line? —

“All things in Nature are beautiful *parables* to the soul that will read them.”

A POET'S FANCY ABOUT NATURE.

A LONG, long time ago, in the Golden Age, when all were pure and good, and there was no sin in the world, every-

body could read from the great world about us just as now we read from books. Nature was a big scroll, with God's handwriting upon it. Everything in God's world spoke a silent message to God's children dwelling upon it. Every tiny leaf or flower and every sparkling drop of water, as well as every mountain, was a letter or a word or a sentence in the language of God to His children. And this silent language was as familiar and as easy to understand as the words we speak every day together. It was as if you should go out into the soft summer air, and the gentle breezes, without any sound at all, should breathe into your soul some sure promises about the heavenly home that will be yours when this world is done. Or as if, sitting upon the bank of a babbling brook, you should open your heart to it, and it should babble to you a story or sing to you a song, gay or grave, just as your heart felt the need for. And all these thoughts and messages were such thoughts as only angels *now* can read; for, alas! sin is now in the world. When sin came into the world, then all our power to read the heavenly language was gone. Sin had stolen away the key of the meaning of it. Ah, what a loss was that! But all was not lost. Jesus came; his coming restored to us the power of reading this handwriting upon the great scroll of Nature. Yet not wholly; only in part. Only just as our hearts get loving and gentle and open can we read it now; for then only are they as they were before sin came into the world. Gentleness and holiness are not yet enough among us to make the language again a familiar one. With great labor we may here and there spell out a letter. Now and then, when some meaning comes feebly shining forth, then how glad, how triumphant we feel! Only when righteousness and love shall drive sin entirely from our midst, — only then will Nature's

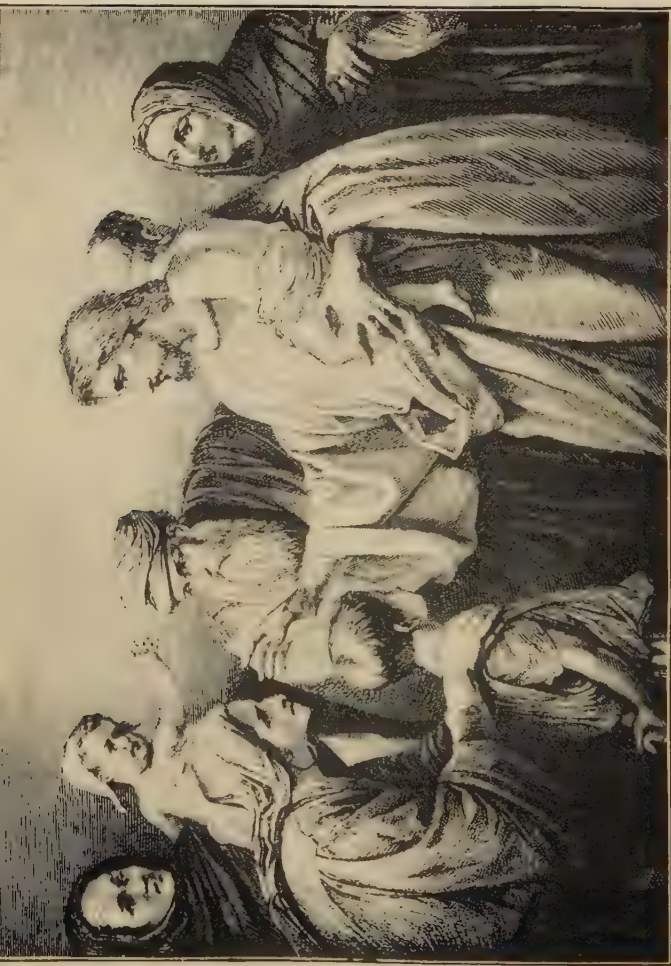
writings be familiar again as they were of old. Only then shall we —

“Read, in letters of light, the language celestial,
Written all over the earth, written all over the sky.”

“For oh, but the world is fair, is fair !
And oh, but the world is sweet !
I will out in the gold of the blossoming mould,
And sit at the Master's feet.
And the love that my heart would speak,
I will fold in the lily's rim,
That the lips of the blossoms, more pure and meek,
May offer it up to him !”

O Lord how manifold are thy works ! In wisdom hast thou made them all ; the earth is full of thy riches.

I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live, I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. — PSALMS civ. 24, 33.



Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.
LUKE xviii. 16.

V.

JESUS BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN.

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.

Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them. — MARK x. 13-17.

WHO will tell this little story? Is there any story in all the New Testament that you children ought to love more than this one?

How many accounts of Jesus' life have we in the Bible?

Four.

Which are they?

Those written by Matthew and Mark and Luke and John.

Find them in your Bible. They are the first four books in the New Testament. All the Old Testament is about things which happened before Jesus lived; all the rest of the New Testament except these four books tells of what happened *after* Jesus lived.

Which one of these four, Matthew or Mark or Luke or John, has told us this story? In all these four accounts of Jesus' life is there any other story of Jesus noticing little children?

No, there is no other, although Matthew and Luke have also told this same one.

Did they tell it in exactly the same way?

It is a little different in the others from Matthew's report.

If you would like to read Matthew's and Luke's story of it, you can find Matthew's in the nineteenth chapter of his account, beginning at the thirteenth verse; and Luke's in his eighteenth chapter, at the fifteenth verse.

What does this one story show us?

It shows us that Jesus loved little children.

Yes; just this one little story is enough to show us that.

What did the disciples do when the parents brought their little ones to Jesus (verse 13). What does rebuke mean? Why did they rebuke them?

They thought so great a person as their master should not be troubled by children.

In these far-away times children were not of so much importance as they are now. Let us hear some of the sayings they used to have about children. Here is one that shows quite well how children used to be looked upon. Even nowadays children sometimes hear it:—

“Children should be seen, and not heard.”

What does that mean?

Ask your father and mother, or, better still, your grandfather and grandmother, if that is not the way it was when they were little.

Here is another: this one is by Solomon, one of the wise men of Jesus' own nation: “He that spareth the rod hateth his son.” It has come down to us like this: “Spare the rod and spoil the child.”

What does it mean?

Ask your grandfather and grandmother about that, too. Martin Luther tells us that one morning he got whipped

nine times at school, and then got whipped at home for being whipped at school. It was not always as bad as that, and I am sure we are all glad it was n't. Still, children were brought up very strictly in old times. They used often to go to school eight or nine and even ten hours a day.

Are children brought up strictly in these days?

No, indeed. People in these days believe in gentle measures with children, and with *all* people.

Here is a saying we have which is quite different from Solomon's.

"Love begets love."

What does that mean?

Be sure you understand that before you leave it. It is something to lay up in your hearts and remember. It makes us like to change Solomon's saying to fit it,—like this: "Spoil the rod and spare the child." *You* like it best that way, don't you?

Do you think parents did not love their children as much in those days?

Yes, the love of fathers and mothers has always been the same.

They were strict *because* they loved them; they thought that it was the only sure way to make their children good.

Why did these parents want Jesus to "touch" their children?

They wanted his blessing on them.

Was it usual for parents to ask blessings for their children.

Yes; they used to carry them to the synagogue to be blessed by the priests and holy men.

Jewish children used to think a great deal of having their father lay his hand upon their head and give them his blessing, and felt severely punished if this blessing was refused.

What may we learn by these parents wishing *Jesus* to bless their children?

We can see how dear *Jesus* was to them, and how holy they felt him to be.

Even in this day we feel it an honor and a pleasure to come into the presence of a great man. A little boy of seven years once went to a President's reception at the White House, and has ever since taken great pleasure and pride in the remembrance of it. You know how eagerly crowds will rush to shake the hand of any great person, or even to look upon him. Think, then, what a pleasure, a sweet satisfaction, it must have been to these loving mothers to have seen their little ones caressed and blessed by the holy, gentle *Jesus*. Even now we would all like it for our children and for ourselves.

“I wish that his hands had been placed on my head,
That his arm had been thrown around me,
And that I might have seen his kind look when he said,
‘Let the little ones come unto me.’”

You cannot feel his hand placed on your head, but the blessing and the sweet words you may every one of you feel are your very own. Remember that, and I believe it will help to make you good.

What did *Jesus* mean by saying “of such is the kingdom of God”?

He meant that the kingdom of God was of those who love and trust *like* little children.

How many of you have a very small brother or sister, or even a very little friend? Have you not noticed how trusting and loving these little ones are? They believe everything you say to them. Their hearts are brimful of

confidence and love. That is just what Jesus tried to have his people feel toward their Jehovah, — just the same love and confidence that these little ones feel toward their parents. Then they could call their Jehovah “Our Father.”

And have you not noticed how *naturally* the little ones do kind and loving things? They do not even seem to know they are doing them. Just as soon as they begin to feel proud of what they know and do they are not any more of the kind which Jesus meant when he said, “Of such is the kingdom of God.” It is only modest hearts which get pure. It is only humble minds which get wise :

He that humbleth himself, shall be exalted. — LUKE xviii. 14.

STAR-FLOWER AND VIOLET.

THE great round sun rose one morning and threw his rays with an unusual splendor over the green fields and hills. One ray found its way between the leaves and grass, and fell directly upon a tiny sleeping star-flower. The flower awoke pleased and refreshed; it lifted its head and drank in new fragrance and beauty from the life-giving ray.

“Wake up, my dear one,” it whispered to a violet sleeping with its head bent above it; “wake up; the bright new day has dawned; shake off the dew from your pretty petals, and talk with me. We will enjoy together the fresh rosy morning. Hear the happy birds, — how gayly they sing!”

“Yes,” murmured the violet, “it is very beautiful, but I wish you and I were taller and grander. It is humiliating to be so small and so hidden. I went to sleep last night wishing we were stately and grand like the big yellow lilies.”

"You may well wish that," said a spotted yellow lily growing near them. "It is almost like not living at all to be hidden away as you are. No one ever sees you, nor do you ever see the big gay world."

"But we have been very happy together," whispered the tiny star-flower, "have we not? Although," she added anxiously, "I *would* like to be out more in the world, and help make it beautiful, as the big lilies do."

Then they were silent, for they were gentle little flowers, and not at all given to complaining. But they were dreaming, and wishing so much that they were able to do more good in the world, that they lost the cheering melody of the birds' morning concert, and the soothing softness of the first fresh glory of the day.

Having missed the inspiration which comes from a good beginning, they were not so happy as they were wont to be. Still, they held up their heads bravely, and looked as bright and blooming as possible.

The morning hours sped on. Boys and girls came laughing and shouting into the field; they gathered big bunches of the yellow lilies, and scampered away again, never noticing the tiny flowers in the grass.

The violet and star-flower were sad at being so neglected.

"If only your stem were a little longer, so that your head came up above the grass, I am sure every one would soon see you were much prettier even than those bright lilies," said the violet, looking down lovingly upon the star-flower.

"Now, that is nonsense," exclaimed the lily. "You only imagine that. We have always been thought a great deal of. It is because we are so very handsome; our yellow satin dress with these gay spots is gorgeous; we —"

"Hush!" interrupted the violet, "I hear children's voices ;

they are coming right over this way. See, it is a lady with a sick child in her arms ; and there is a little boy."

The lady came nearer, and spreading a shawl just by the three flowers, laid the sick child upon it.

"I wish we could speak to her," whispered the star-flower ; "we would say such pretty things to her."

"Now," said the little boy, "we will find some bright flowers for you. See ! here is a fine big lily ; how gay it is ! I will bring you a whole armful of them."

The boy had plucked the proud lily, who looked triumphantly back to its little companions as if to say, "Did I not tell you so?"

The child held it a moment, then dropped it, and cried out gleefully :—

"Oh, see, Mamma ! see these two little flowers together, —a little one with a tiny *littler* one just under it ! It seemed as though they loved each other like you and me. Do not pick them ; let them stay till we go home, then we will take the turf with them, so they can live."

And she scarcely noticed the gay lilies any more at all ; only watched the "two little friends" as she called them.

"They look as though they were whispering together," she said, putting her face down close to them. "Perhaps they are talking to me, only I cannot understand ; and I know it is something nice."

So the "two little friends" were carried home to the bedside of the sick child, and comforted her and cheered her.

"Shall we bring the gay lilies too?" asked the little boy.

"Why, yes, if you wish," answered the little girl, carelessly ; "but these are the *darlingest*. Perhaps those make the most show out in the big field ; but these are the best for loving, they are so modest and sweet."

Then the mother looked very thoughtful, and said in her heart : —

“It is just like that with *people*. The proud ones, and those who think they know a great deal, may make the most *show* in the world, but the modest ones get the most of heaven into their hearts. They are the ‘best for loving.’ ‘Of such’ modest, humble ones ‘is the kingdom of God.’ ”

“The bird that soars on highest wing,
Builds on the ground her lowly nest ;
And she that doth most sweetly sing,
Sings in the shade, where all things rest :
In lark and nightingale we see
What honor hath humility.”

Before honor, is humility. — PROV. xv. 33.

Read the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, in the eighteenth chapter of Luke, beginning at the tenth verse. Jesus spoke this parable just before the children were brought to him to be blessed. I think you will find that parable means exactly what we have been learning in this lesson.



Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

MARK i. 17.

VI.

THE CALLING OF THE DISCIPLES.

Now as he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea : for they were fishers.

And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

And straightway he called them : and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

MARK i. 16-20.

Who can tell the whole of this story? (If you would like to read how Matthew tells this story, you can find it in the fourth chapter of his gospel, beginning at the eighteenth verse.) What were the names of the first two brothers Jesus called? What other name did Jesus give to Simon a little time afterwards?

He called him Peter. Thereafter he was usually called by that name; sometimes, Simon Peter. Peter was one of the most active of Jesus' disciples, both before Jesus' death and after. Look in the last part of the New Testament and you will see two letters written by him.

What were the names of the other two brothers? Look at the picture now. See them coming toward him. Who are those two with Jesus? Who is the one left in the boat?

Can you tell which one of these brothers was called the "beloved disciple"?

It was John.

Did Jesus love him more than the others?

It is thought so.

Why do you suppose Jesus loved him better than the others?

His spirit was gentle and loving. He was full of zeal, too, and earnest like Peter. There are many things which show Jesus' love for him.

Can you tell any of them?

Before Jesus died he left the care of his mother to John.

Did John try to care for her?

Yes; after Jesus was crucified it was John who led Mary away. It is thought to be this John who wrote one of the four accounts of Jesus' life. It is believed, too, that he wrote those chapters in the New Testament called First and Second and Third John.

Why is it easy to believe so?

Because they are so full of the same loving spirit that was in Jesus' teachings. They seem *like* John.

These chapters have many words in them so much like Jesus' words that we almost forget they are not his. Read one or two of them and you will see.

He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. — 1 JOHN iv. 8.

God is love: and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. — 1 JOHN iv. 16.

The text at the end of the lesson is John's too.

Were these four all of Jesus' disciples?

No; he had a great many disciples, but these were with him more than the others.

What does disciple mean?

It means a learner.

Did these men learn of Jesus? How did they learn of him?

They followed him about and listened and asked questions. He often taught them and explained things to them privately when they were away from the crowds.

Why did Jesus call these men to be his disciples?

He wished to teach them so they could help him in his work.

And did they teach any?

Not much while Jesus lived: they were occupied in learning; but they did after his death.

Did he choose any *particular* disciples? How many did he choose?

He chose twelve.

What were these twelve called?

The Twelve Apostles.

What does apostle mean?

It means one who is sent.

Would you like to know the names of these twelve apostles? You can find them in Luke vi. 12, and again in Mark x. 2.

Who is mentioned first in both these accounts? Why is that?

Peter seems always to have been looked upon as the leader of the little band of apostles.

The last time Jesus was with his disciples upon the earth what command did he give them?

Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. — MARK xvi. 15.

Did they do as Jesus commanded them?

Yes; the preaching of these and others of Jesus' disciples

is the beginning of the great Christian Church we are born into.

Do you remember the little parable of the mustard-seed which Jesus once gave to his listeners? Who can tell it? Let us read it.

And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it. — MARK iv. 30-32.

Can anything show us the meaning of this parable better than our own Christian Church?

What was the seed that was sown?

The seed was the new and true thought about God and heavenly things.

Who was the sower?

Jesus was the sower.

What has this seed now grown to be?

The great Christian Church all over the world.

Has it stopped growing? Does it still, like the mustard-tree, "shoot out great branches"?

The Church is growing still. We hope it will never stop growing till its branches have spread all over Africa and India, and, indeed, over all the earth.

Truly Jesus did a great thing for us when he sent these apostles forth to spread his heavenly word.

Who will read the text under the picture? To whom did Jesus speak this little parable? Do you suppose Simon and Andrew understood what he meant? What do *you* think he meant?

Another time he said to Simon Peter, "Henceforth thou shalt catch men."

Does that not mean the same thing? Did these disciples afterwards "catch men"?

Yes; just as all their lives till now they had been gathering fish into their boat, so all the rest of their lives they spent in gathering men into Jesus' kingdom of love and righteousness. This parable must have meant a great deal to these fishermen.

Is there need in these days of any to go forth and "catch men"? How long shall we need these "fishers of men"?

So long as there are any who do not know of Jesus' teachings; so long as there are any who do wrong, or any who are unfortunate or unhappy.

Think of all the ways we have of gathering in the evil ones and the ignorant ones and the unhappy ones.

Yes, there are the churches and the preaching. But there are other ways.

How do the Hospitals do it?

How do the Orphan Asylums and Homes do it?

Do you think the prisons do it?

In other times the prisons were only for punishing wicked persons, and for keeping them shut up so they could do no harm. In these days those having the care of prisoners are trying to do them good, and to teach them how much better it will be for them to live a good life than a bad one, when they leave the prison. Indeed, we are beginning to feel that this work must go on all the time, — in little everyday things as well as in large ones.

Can *you* do anything about it?

Every time you do a kind or helpful thing you may feel that you are doing a little toward helping on Jesus' work.

If you have a chance to do a great thing, do it; but most

of us cannot do great things. We can do a number of little things, though; and is it not encouraging to think that every time we do a kind or helpful thing we are helping to bring the kingdom of heaven upon earth? The kingdom of love and righteousness can only come through our *being* loving and righteous.

Read now this short but lovely story. It was written by a young girl whose name was Toru Dutt. That is a Hindu name, for this young girl lived far, far away in Hindustan. Her own people did not care for her poems. It seems to me sometimes, as I read them, that it needs a *Christian* heart to quite feel what they mean. I cannot tell; but when you read the story I am sure you will feel, with me, that this gentle-hearted Hindu girl was of the kind which Jesus meant when he said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." The story was not written in Hindu. Toru learned our language, and these are her very own words.

THE TREE OF LIFE.

I WAS ill, — feverish, and oh, so weary. My eyes were closed, but I was not asleep. Nay, for it was broad daylight, and I had tried in vain to sleep. My hand was in my father's, and I could feel his presence near me. Often and often we remained thus, silent, hand in hand. What need was there that I should tell to him my thoughts or he tell his to me? So much we loved each other that each could know the other's thoughts the moment they arose. Suddenly a strange light shone about us, and everything was changed. Nay, I was not asleep; wide awake I was. An open plain seemed to be about us stretching, stretching, — oh, so far! A glorious light was over it, — a light like that

which the stars shed over fields of snow in a clear frosty winter night, only it was far more brilliant and shining, and very restful and calm. In the midst of the shining plain I saw, — for I was wide awake, — a tree with spreading branches, and with silver and golden leaves of many kinds. It shimmered so radiantly that no words may tell you of it. Beside the tree an angel stood. He plucked a few of the tree's small sprays and bound them round my head. Oh, the delicious touch of those strange leaves ! My brow no longer throbbed, nor did I any more feel the fever in my veins. And then I cried, "And my father ! — bind my father's forehead with these leaves !" Just one leaf the angel touched upon his brow, then gently whispered, "Nay, *this* time my mission is to thee." Never, never had I seen before a face so full of holy love and pity.

Wondering I looked awhile ; then all at once
Opened my tear-dimmed eyes, when lo ! the light
Was gone, — the light as of the stars when snow
Lies deep upon the ground. No more, no more
Was seen the Angel's face. I only found
My father watching patient by my bed,
And holding in his own, close-pressed, my hand.

I have pondered much upon the meaning of this legend the far-away Hindu girl has sung to us, till now it says to me, almost as though it were a voice direct from heaven, "It is only through loving hearts that the angels can minister to those on earth."

Let us keep our hearts loving, so that the angels may use them. Do you not like to think that every time you do a kind or helpful thing you are refreshing some one with a little "spray from the Tree of Life" ?

It is only another way of saying we are doing our mite toward bringing the kingdom of heaven upon the earth.

Never falter in giving your heart for the angels to use.
Give your *self*, your whole self, always to doing right things
and kind and loving things.

“ Give, as the morning that flows out of heaven !
Give, as the waves when their channel is riven !
Give, as the free air and sunshine are given, —
Lavishly, utterly, carelessly, give !
Give as He gave, who gave thee to live ! ”

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in
deed and in truth. — 1 JOHN iii. 18.

THE END.

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